

# QTMUN 2024

---



1812

1812

---

DIRECTOR  
Nazaha Fazil

CRISIS MANAGER  
Celina Fratzscher

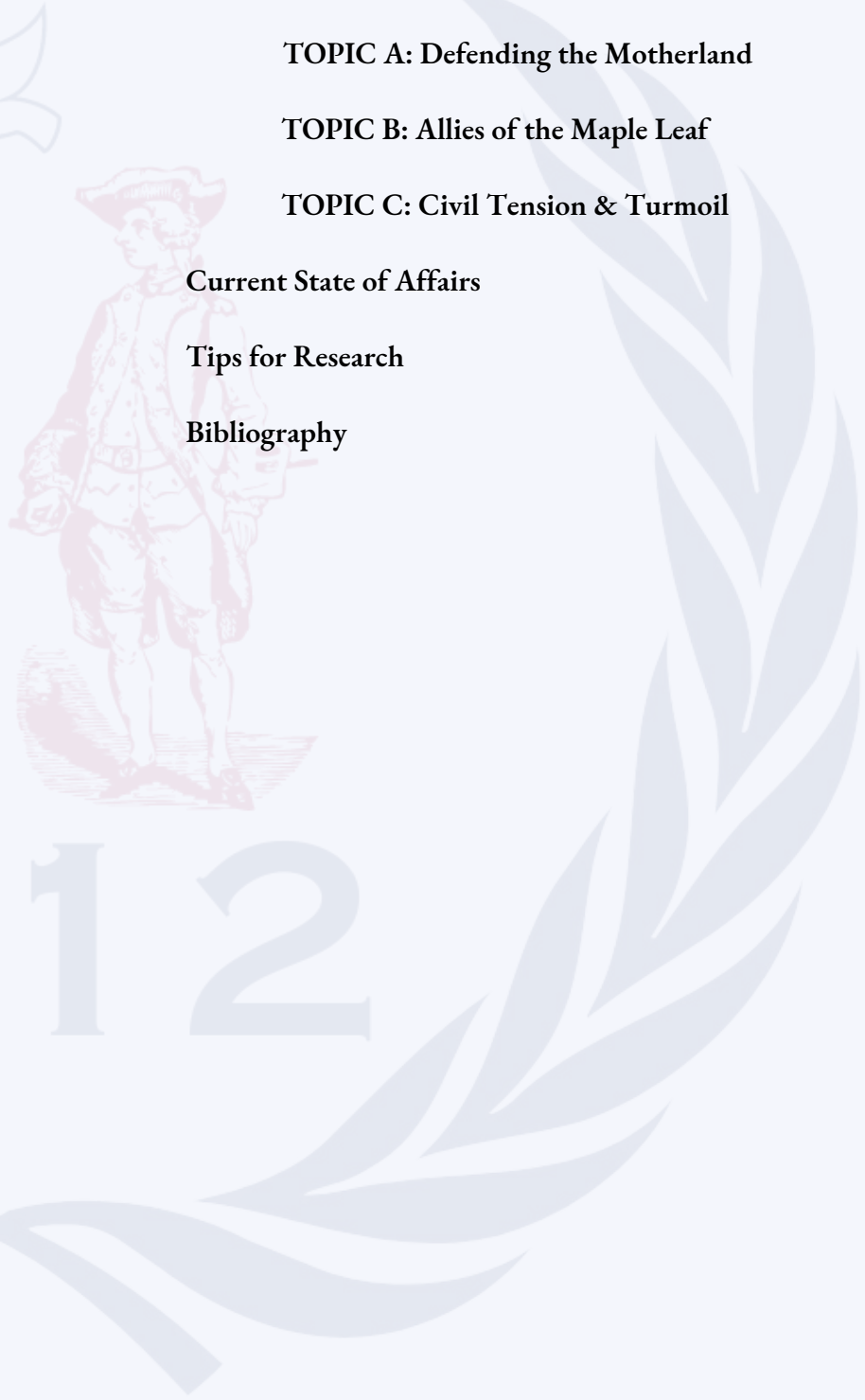
MODERATOR  
Kevin Huynh

# Contents

A faint background illustration on the left side of the page shows a soldier in 18th-century attire standing next to a large laurel wreath. The numbers '1' and '2' are also faintly visible in the background.

Equity Disclaimers	3
Model United Nations at U of T Code of Conduct	5
Position Papers	7
Letter from the Director	8
Introduction	9
Definitions	10
Historical Background	11
Event Timeline	11
Territorial Timeline	12
Part I: Local Affairs	16
The Canadian Seeds of Constitution (1763 - 1793)	16
Economic Tensions in the North (1779 - 1812)	17
Part II: Global Affairs	18
The Napoleonic Wars (1789 - 1812)	18
America's Retaliation (1806 - 1812)	19

<b>Topics for Debate</b>	20
<b>TOPIC A: Defending the Motherland</b>	20
<b>TOPIC B: Allies of the Maple Leaf</b>	21
<b>TOPIC C: Civil Tension &amp; Turmoil</b>	22
<b>Current State of Affairs</b>	23
<b>Tips for Research</b>	24
<b>Bibliography</b>	25



# Equity Disclaimers

Throughout this committee, delegates will be engaging in complex debates and discussions covering a wide array of topics. As UTMUN seeks to provide an enriching educational experience that facilitates understanding of the implications of real-world issues, the content of our committees may involve sensitive or controversial subject matter for the purposes of academia and accuracy. We ask that delegates be respectful, professional, tactful, and diplomatic when engaging with all committee content, representing their assigned country's or character's position in an equitable manner, communicating with staff and other delegates, and responding to opposing viewpoints.

**This Background Guide and 1812 presents topics that may be distressing to some Delegates, including but not limited to the following: war, widespread violence, slavery, forced labour, insurgency, civil conflict, classism, grief, and suffering. Great care will be taken by staff in handling any/all of these topics should they arise.**

As this is a war committee, please refrain from including depictions of gore, exploitation of prisoners of war or Indigenous communities, excessive violence, inhumane treatment of anyone, etc. in committee speeches, private directives, public directives, notes, conversations, etc. UTMUN recognizes the sensitivity associated with many of our topics, and we encourage you to be aware of and set healthy boundaries that work for you. This may include: refraining from reading certain parts of the background guide, preparing yourself before reading this background guide, doing some self-care or seeking support after reading the background guide, or anything that can help make you feel more comfortable. We ask that all Delegates remain considerate of the boundaries that other Delegates set.

UTMUN expects that all discussions amongst delegates will remain productive and respectful of one another. If you have any equity concerns or need assistance in setting boundaries or navigating sensitive subject matter or have any questions at all, please do not hesitate to reach out to me or our Chief Equity Officer, Harvi Karatha, at [equity@utmun.org](mailto:equity@utmun.org). We want you to feel safe and comfortable at UTMUN!

If you wish to switch committees after having read the content warnings for this committee, please do the following:

a) Fill out the [UTMUN 2024 Committee Switch Request Form](#).

If you have any equity concerns, equity-based questions, or delegate conflicts, please do any of the following:

1. Email [equity@utmun.org](mailto:equity@utmun.org) to reach Harvi Karatha, email [deputy.equity@utmun.org](mailto:deputy.equity@utmun.org) to reach Iva Zivaljevic, or reach out to me at [1812@utmun.org](mailto:1812@utmun.org).
2. Fill out the Anonymous (if preferred) UTMUN Equity Contact Form: <https://forms.gle/XEH3DCTwX3JzzSnr6>.
3. Notify/Ask any staff member to connect you to Harvi Karatha or Iva Zivaljevic.

# Model United Nations at U of T Code of Conduct

The below code of conduct applies to all attendees of UTMUN 2024 for the entire duration of the conference, and any conference-related activities (including but not limited to committee sessions, conference socials, committee breaks, and the opening and closing ceremonies).

1. Harassment and bullying in any form will not be tolerated, the nature of which includes, but is not limited to, discrimination on the basis of race, national origin, ethnicity, colour, religion, sex, age, mental and physical disabilities, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression,
  - a. Harassment and bullying include, but are not limited to, insulting and/or degrading language or remarks; threats and intimidation; and intentional (direct or indirect) discrimination and/or marginalization of a group and/or individual;
    - i. The above prohibition on harassment, bullying, and inappropriate behaviour extends to any and all behaviour as well as written and verbal communication during the conference, including notes, conversation both during and outside committees, and general demeanour at all conference events;
    - ii. UTMUN reserves the right to determine what constitutes bullying and/or inappropriate behaviour toward any individual and/or group;
  - b. Attendees must not engage in any behaviour that constitutes physical violence or the threat of violence against any groups and/or individuals, including sexual violence and harassment, such as, but not limited to,
    - i. Unwelcome suggestive or indecent comments about one's appearance;
    - ii. Nonconsensual sexual contact and/or behaviour between any individuals and/or groups of individuals;
    - iii. Sexual contact or behaviour between delegates and staff members is strictly forbidden;
2. UTMUN expects all attendees to conduct themselves in a professional and respectful manner at all times during the conference. Specific expectations, include, but are not limited to,
  - a. Attendees must, if able, contribute to the general provision of an inclusive conference and refrain from acting in a manner that restricts other attendees' capacity to learn and thrive in an intellectually stimulating environment;
  - b. Attendees must adhere to the dress code, which is Western business attire;
    - i. Exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis depending on the attendees' ability to adhere to the previous sub-clause;
    - ii. Attendees are encouraged to contact Chief Equity Officer, Harvi Karatha, at [equity@utmun.org](mailto:equity@utmun.org) with questions or concerns about the dress code or conference accessibility;

- c. Attendees must refrain from the use of cultural appropriation to represent their character and/or country, including the use of cultural dress, false accent, and any behaviour that perpetuates a national or personal stereotype;
- d. Delegates must not use music, audio recordings, graphics, or any other media at any time unless approved and requested to be shared by the Dais and/or the Chief Equity Officer, Harvi Karatha at [equity@utmun.org](mailto:equity@utmun.org);
- e. Attendees must abide by instructions and/or orders given by conference staff, members;
  - i. Attendees are exempt from this above sub-clause only if the instructions and/or orders given are unreasonable or inappropriate;

3. Delegates, staff, and all other conference participants are expected to abide by Ontario and Canadian laws and Toronto by-laws, as well as rules and regulations specific to the University of Toronto. This includes, but is not limited to,

- a. Attendees, regardless of their age, are strictly prohibited from being under the influence and/or engaging in the consumption of illicit substances, such as alcohol or illicit substances for the duration of the conference;
- b. Attendees are prohibited from smoking (cigarettes or e-cigarettes, including vapes) on University of Toronto property;
- c. Attendees must refrain from engaging in vandalism and the intentional and/or reckless destruction of any public or private property, including conference spaces, venues, furniture, resources, equipment, and university buildings;
  - i. Neither UTMUN nor any representatives of UTMUN is responsible for damage inflicted by attendees to property on or off University of Toronto campus;
  - ii. Individuals will be held responsible for any damages.

4. The Secretariat reserves the right to impose restrictions on delegates and/or attendees for not adhering to/violating any of the above stipulations. Disciplinary measures include, but are not limited to,

- a. Suspension from committee, in its entirety or for a specific period of time;
- b. Removal from the conference and/or conference venue(s);
- c. Disqualification from awards;
- d. Disqualification from participation in future conference-related events.

5. UTMUN reserves the right to the final interpretation of this document.

For further clarification on UTMUN's policies regarding equity or conduct, please see this [form](#). For any questions/concerns, or any equity violations that any attendee(s) would like to raise, please contact UTMUN's Chief Equity Officer, Harvi Karatha, at [equity@utmun.org](mailto:equity@utmun.org) or fill out this anonymous Equity Contact Form: <https://forms.gle/Psc5Luxp22T3c9Zz8>.

## Position Papers:

At UTMUN 2024, position papers are required to qualify for awards. Each committee will also give out one Best Position Paper award. To learn more about position paper writing, formatting, and submission, please check out the [position paper guidelines](#). Please read through the guidelines carefully as this page will describe content recommendations, formatting requirements, and details on citations. If you have any questions about position paper writing, feel free to contact your Dais via your committee email ([1812@utmun.org](mailto:1812@utmun.org)) or reach out to [academics@utmun.org](mailto:academics@utmun.org).





## Letter from the Director:

*Hello delegates!*

It is a great honour to welcome you to 1812, a historical crisis committee at UTMUN 2024! This committee is the accumulated work of a team of passionate crisis nerds who have been extensively researching, content writing, and crafting the ideal experience to frustrate- ahem... engage and excite you!

Before I scare you more, allow me to introduce myself: my name is Nazaha, and I'm a second-year student at the University of Toronto currently studying Mathematics & Computer Science. I began my Model UN journey as a delegate in a Hunger Games crisis committee five years ago and haven't quite been able to shake off the crisis obsession since. I'm joined by a talented team of crisis analysts, a crisis manager, and a moderator who eagerly await the day that we get to bring this committee off the page for you to experience.

Before then, however, let us introduce the beaver era of Canadian history! All historical events and characters listed in the Background, Character, and Mechanics Guides are accurate with real Canadian history, but your actions in committee are likely to lead you onto an alternate timeline of sorts. Because of this, the historical content of this Background Guide focuses heavily on the history before June 17th, 1812, rather than the events during and after the War of 1812. This committee will demand that you consistently act quickly and decisively to solve the issues you are presented with, strategize and plan effectively, and collaborate well with other delegates. Most importantly, it demands that you keep your eye on the bigger picture!

While we look forward to watching you come up with your calculated battle tactics and fortify your strategic strongholds, we ask that you also be mindful of the sensitive subject matter of this committee given the major themes of war and violence. At UTMUN, we hope to facilitate respectful discussions of these sensitive topics to ensure that all delegates and staff feel comfortable enough to participate in an equitable and fair environment.

If you have any questions regarding content, position papers, mechanics, etc., you are welcome to reach out to me directly at [1812@utmun.org](mailto:1812@utmun.org). If you have questions more generally about UTMUN or Model UN, please reach out to [external@utmun.org](mailto:external@utmun.org) or [academics@utmun.org](mailto:academics@utmun.org). We hope that you have as much fun participating in this conference as we did organizing it! By the way, we weren't joking about the beavers. They are everywhere. You have been warned.

*Glowing regards,*

Nazaha Fazil | Committee Director of 1812

[1812@utmun.org](mailto:1812@utmun.org)

## Introduction:

Let us spin the dial of time back 212 years to an era of Western history brimming with conflict, war, and tension. For almost three decades, major European powers France and Great Britain have been struggling to maintain their reign over North American land against the emergence of the United States of America, a new power united by strong motives of liberty, supremacy, and domination. The great, centuries-long conflict between France and Great Britain directly sparked the Seven Years' War across North America and the Napoleonic Wars across Europe, and indirectly sparked the American Revolution against Great Britain, and now, the War of 1812.

This committee is situated here in Toronto, which is not yet a city rich with greenery, littered with cigarettes, and riddled with construction that was supposed to be done last summer; instead, Toronto is a small town in Upper Canada better known as York, with British-Canadian settlers living near the harbourfront. (For those of you still stuck in the future, this is where Parliament Street and Front Street intersect!<sup>1</sup>) Upper Canada is a quiet, vast colony of the British Empire with a predominantly Loyalist, Protestant, and English-speaking population. You, your fellow delegates, and the many other dwellers of Upper Canada are living in the aftermath of the American Revolution—which many among you escaped to live here—and face the inadvertent consequences of the Napoleonic Wars happening across the Atlantic Ocean. You are facing the pressures of a tense economic relationship with Lower Canada, who share your values as a British colony but not your background or culture. For many years, the quietness of Upper Canadian towns and the bustling of the fur trade have masked the fear of attack that the United States has been planning against the British Empire. It is June 17, 1812, and the day has officially arrived; the United States of America has declared war, and their first target is you.

To understand the grounds on which the United States has decided to open fire, we must delve into the civil and global conflicts during this era of Canadian history and the series of unfortunate events that have led you to this day. As high-ranking military officers, government officials, tradesmen, diplomats, and leaders associated with Upper Canada, you have been tasked with the duty of serving Canada as a member of a council that will make decisions on battle strategy and defensive operations in the upcoming war. As you read on, you may come to realize that you have been thrust into a war that you had no intention of fighting, but who's to say you cannot choose your own cause to fight, and influence those of the esteemed delegates around you? And who's to say you cannot capitalize on this crisis to turn it in your favour?

The choice is entirely yours. And please, for the sake of Canada, choose wisely.

---

<sup>1</sup> "Toronto."

## Definitions:

### THE SEVEN YEAR'S WAR

A global conflict that lasted from 1756 to 1763 involving several European nations and their colonies. The war was fought on European, North American, and Indian grounds, with the two main powers boiling down to Great Britain and France. Both powers sought to establish economic and territorial dominance across the oceans and land. Great Britain emerged victorious after the Treaty of Paris in 1763 granted the majority of non-American North American land to Great Britain.<sup>2</sup>

### CONFEDERATION

The process by which the colonies of British North America unite to become the Dominion of Canada, placing total responsibility over governance, legislation, and expansion primarily in the hands of Canadians (rather than the British).<sup>3</sup>

### TREATY

A binding formal agreement, contract, or other written document that outlines the obligations of two or more parties in international law. During this era, treaties such as the Treaty of Paris (1763) concluded periods of conflict and were written to ensure lasting diplomacy and peace.<sup>4</sup>

### LOYALIST

A North American citizen loyal to the British monarch. Many loyalists escaped the American Revolutionary War and resettled in Quebec, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick, increasing the population of British North America significantly after the American Revolution.<sup>5</sup>

### IMPRESSMENT

The seizure of American seamen working on British ships to enlist in the British military. American ships were searched by British “press gangs” under the guise of finding British soldiers who fled the military, seizing anyone who could fit the bill. Several notable occurrences of impressment led to the United States declaring war on Great Britain in 1812.<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> “Context of the Seven Years’ War > The Siege of Québec: An Episode of the Seven Years’ War > The National Battlefields Commission.”

<sup>3</sup> “Confederation.”

<sup>4</sup> Shaw, “Treaty | Definition, Examples, & Facts.”

<sup>5</sup> “Loyalists in Canada | The Canadian Encyclopedia.”

<sup>6</sup> “War of 1812.”

# Historical Background:

## Event Timeline:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Canada</li> <li>■ Great Britain</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The United States of America</li> <li>■ France</li> </ul>
---	--

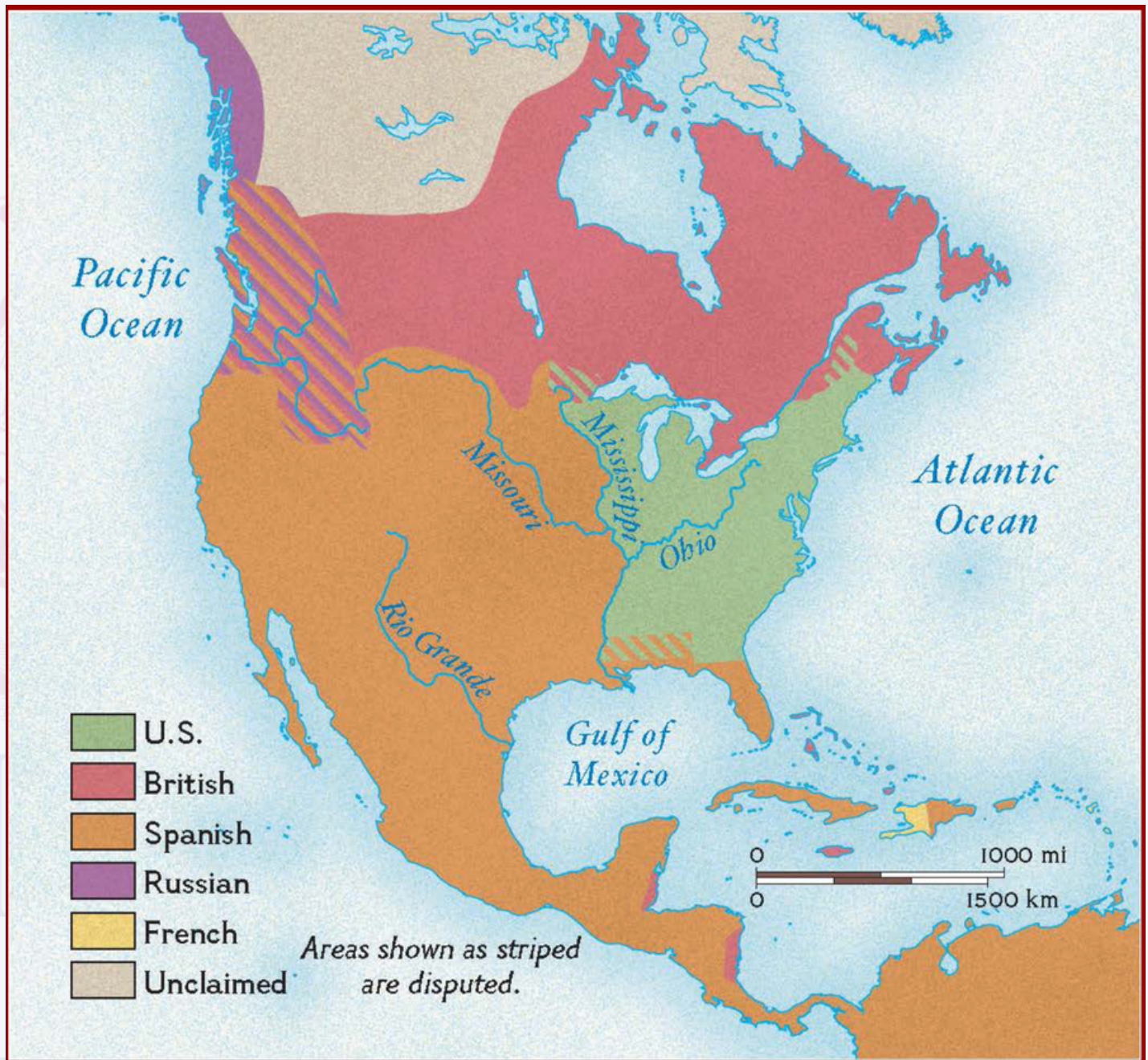
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1670 • The King of Great Britain grants exclusive trading rights over the watershed draining into Hudson's Bay, creating the new Hudson's Bay Company</li> <li>1763 • The Royal Proclamation of 1763 is enacted, bringing New France under the British Empire</li> <li>1774 • The Quebec Act of 1774 is enacted, creating the British-governed Province of Quebec</li> <li>1775 • The American Revolutionary War begins</li> <li>1776 • The Declaration of Independence is written and signed</li> <li>1779 • The North West Company is formed in opposition to the HBC</li> <li>1783 • Great Britain signs the Treaty of Paris, granting independence to the Thirteen Colonies of America</li> <li>1784 • New Brunswick becomes a recognized province</li> <li>1789 • The French Revolutionary Wars begin in France</li> <li>1791 • The Constitutional Act of 1791 is enacted, creating the two provinces of Upper Canada and Lower Canada</li> <li>1792 • Great Britain, Austria and Prussia join the French Revolutionary Wars as aid for the french monarch</li> <li>1793 • Louis XVI is executed, beginning Napoleon Bonaparte's rule</li> <li>1799 • Napoleon Bonaparte becomes First Consul of the French Republic, beginning the Napoleonic Wars</li> <li>1804 • Napoleon is crowned Emperor of the French Empire, which now spans most of Europe</li> <li>1805 • Great Britain successfully defends against French attempts to invade the British isles</li> <li>1806 • Napoleon issues the Continental System to restrict British trade with neutral and allied parties</li> <li>1806 • Great Britain retaliates with the Orders-in-Council requiring a British license to port in Europe</li> <li>1806 • British impressment of American soldiers begins</li> <li>1807 • HMS Leonard opens fire on the USS Chesapeake, killing 3 men</li> <li>1807 • The Embargo Act is passed</li> <li>1809 • James Madison is sworn in as the 4<sup>th</sup> president of the United States of America</li> <li>1812 • The United States declares war on Great Britain</li> </ul>	<p>THE CANADIAN SEEDS OF CONSTITUTION</p>	<p>ECONOMIC TENSIONS IN THE NORTH</p>	<p>THE NAPOLEONIC WARS</p>	<p>AMERICA'S RETALIATION</p>
---	---	---------------------------------------	----------------------------	------------------------------

Territorial Timeline:



Figure 1. North America, 1763 (Immediately after the Seven Years' War).<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Rust, "The French & Indian War: Setting the Stage for the American Revolution."



**Figure 2.** North America, 1783 (Borders outlined by the Treaty of Paris of 1783, immediately after the American Revolution).<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup>“Treaty of Paris, 1783.”

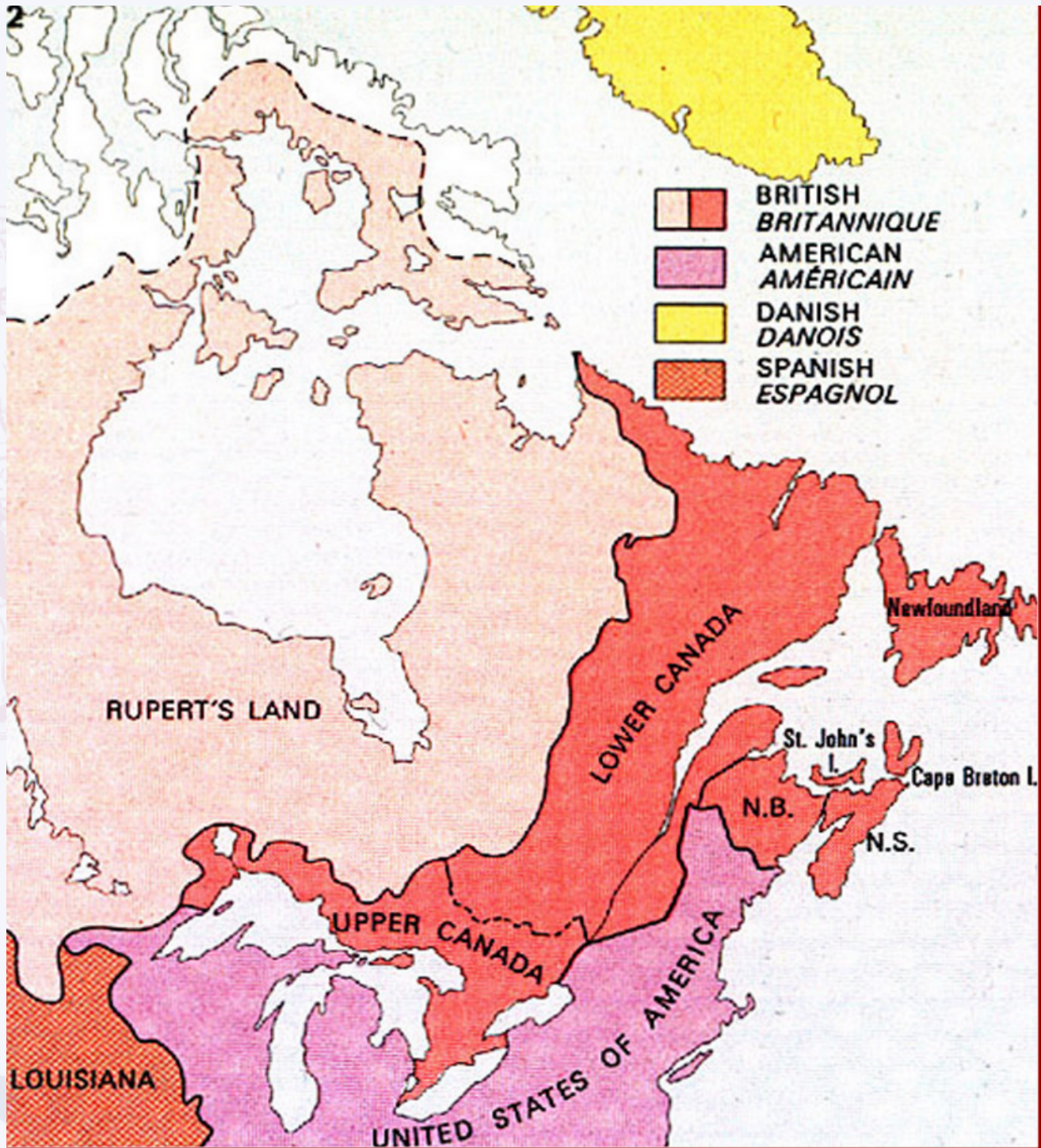


Figure 3. Canada, 1791 (Borders outlined by the Constitutional Act of 1791).<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup>“The Changing Shape of Ontario: A Guide to Boundaries, Names and Regional Governments - 1791.”



Figure 4. Canada and the United States, 1812 (The battleground of the War of 1812).<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> "File:Anglo American War 1812 Locations Map-En.Svg - Wikipedia."



## PART I: Local Affairs

### The Canadian Seeds of Constitution (1763 to 1793)

At this point in time, North America has seen hundreds of battles between British, French, American, Spanish, and Indigenous forces, with each occupying pockets of territory across the continent. The conclusion of the Seven Years' War marked a pivot in the rule of Great Britain over its North American colonies. The British victory in the Seven Years' War meant that, by the terms of the Treaty of Paris, the territory of New France north of the American colonies would be ceded to the British. By the Royal Proclamation of 1763, New France was required to have a royal governor with the authority to call an assembly. However, French inhabitants could not vote nor sit in the assembly on account of their Roman Catholic beliefs.<sup>11</sup> The Quebec Act of 1774 sought to change this, granting permission for Roman Catholics in New France – now referred to as Quebec – to hold public office.<sup>12</sup> The Quebec Act recognized the legitimacy of French law and the Roman Catholic faith, giving more power to the French descendants of Canada. This Act enraged British colonies south of Canada who felt that it nullified the British victory of the Seven Years' War. Alongside several other actions made by Great Britain to undermine the sentiment of victory and liberty that British-Americans had gained from the Seven Years' War, this Act ended up being one of the triggers of the American Revolution.<sup>13</sup>

With thousands of Americans pledging their loyalty to the British monarch and fleeing the fight for independence, Quebec and Nova Scotia swelled in population as American loyalists and escaped slaves moved north and settled into new homes. Nova Scotia became a chief refuge for loyalists in the American Revolution. In 1784, New Brunswick was established as a separate province following the resettling of Nova Scotians who were dissatisfied with their government.<sup>14</sup>

The Constitutional Act of 1791 responded to concerns over land ownership and the civil law governing Quebec.<sup>15</sup> The Province of Quebec split into two colonies called Upper Canada and Lower Canada, with Upper Canada habitants being mainly Loyalist, Protestant and English-speaking, and Lower Canada habitants being heavily Catholic and French-speaking. Both Upper and Lower Canada were officially brought under the same British constitution, effectively deeming them both equal colonies under the law. In 1793, Upper Canada became the first province in the British Empire to publicly move towards the abolition of slavery.<sup>16</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup> "Canada | History, Population, Immigration, Capital, & Currency."

<sup>12</sup> Immigration, "Discover Canada - Canada's History."

<sup>13</sup> "Canada | History, Population, Immigration, Capital, & Currency."

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Immigration, "Discover Canada - Canada's History."

## Economic Tensions in the North (1779 to 1812)

Alongside the differences in religion and political structure between Upper and Lower Canada, the battle for control over Canada's economy instigated much of the civil conflict between Upper and Lower Canadians. The fur trade emerged as a major North American commercial enterprise in the 17th century from when the first European settlers arrived in North America.<sup>17</sup> Two French traders sought to establish a company that would span across the interior of the continent via Hudson's Bay to gain access to more fur resources. The company was heavily governed by English policies for trading, economic decisions, and factory construction, and by the late 1700s, the new London-based Hudson's Bay Company held a monopoly over the Canadian fur trade.<sup>18</sup>

With time, however, competitors emerged. Many Indigenous groups began to depend on the fur trade for European goods such as metal tools, food, or guns. With the Hudson's Bay Company choosing to scatter trading posts in the interior of Rupert's Land rather than in the Province of Quebec, rival companies took the opportunity to open up trade closer to Indigenous settlements instead of waiting for them to reach trading posts on Rupert's Land.<sup>19</sup> In 1773, a Montreal-based overland trade network called the North West Company emerged as a matched rival to the Hudson's Bay Company, and by 1795, the NWC controlled much of the northern fur trade.<sup>20</sup>

The HBC had a major advantage over the North West Company in that the company could directly acquire supply through ports along the coast of Hudson's Bay, while long NWC supply chains through the interior of Canada slowed down their trade.<sup>21</sup> By the 1800s, the HBC began to acquire the necessary skills to tackle the NWC on its own trading grounds, opening up a competing series of trading posts in the interior of Canada in the years leading up to 1812.<sup>22</sup>

Many Upper Canadians and Indigenous allies depend heavily on the Hudson's Bay Company for food, tools, and necessities. However, the series of land disputes, trade blockages, and ongoing battles have escalated between shareholders of the Hudson's Bay Company, the North West Company, and Indigenous groups whose settlements have been disturbed. If this part of the conflict goes unresolved, a large group of Upper Canadians and Indigenous Peoples will be severely undersupplied and disadvantaged, and a full-blown civil war may be on the horizon for Upper and Lower Canadians in conjunction with the war they should be fighting together on the American border.

---

<sup>17</sup> "Hudson's Bay Company."

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> "The North West Company, 1779–1821 | The Canadian Encyclopedia."

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

## PART II: Global Affairs

### The Napoleonic Wars (1789 to 1812)

The French Revolution (1789-1799) was a period of social, political, and military upheaval in France. Among the liberal and radical ideologies that swept through France, the greatest consequence of the French Revolution was Napoleon Bonaparte, a French military commander whose ascension to Emperor of the French Empire arose from the series of battles that defined the Napoleonic Wars.<sup>23</sup> Having seized the rule of France, Napoleon sought to expand his rule across Europe and later to the rest of the world by using innovative military strategies to offset numerical disadvantages against European powers. A series of five coalitions across 1792 to 1809 formed by several European states—including Great Britain, Austria, Prussia, Naples, Spain, and Russia—were established to aid the French monarch in resisting the forces of Napoleon Bonaparte. However, after Louis XVI's death in 1793 officially put the rule of France in Napoleon's hands, the focus of the coalitions shifted to keeping France's attempts at the usurpation of Europe at bay. After establishing himself as the Emperor of the French Empire in 1804, he conquered and brought several European states under the French Empire and by 1809, only the British isles—home to the most powerful deterrence against Napoleon's conquest—remained completely untouched.<sup>24</sup>

Much of Great Britain's advantage lay on the seas surrounding Europe and spanning North Atlantic waters, with the Royal Navy holding complete domination of overseas trade. During the Fourth Coalition in 1806, Napoleon enacted the Continental System to gain a greater economic advantage over the Atlantic Ocean, creating a trade blockage meant to prohibit French allies or neutral states from trading with Great Britain.<sup>25</sup> In retaliation, Britain ordered that all neutral ships had to obtain a license before they could port in Europe, enforcing the policy through their total naval domination over the Atlantic waters surrounding Western Europe.<sup>26</sup>

---

<sup>23</sup> "French Revolution."

<sup>24</sup> "The McGill University Napoleon Collection."

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> "War of 1812."

## America's Retaliation (1806 to 1812)

Tensions arose as the United States of America, a vehemently neutral nation trading freely with both the English and the French, began experiencing the pressures of economic warfare in the Napoleonic Wars. Sailors in the British navy began to desert the war effort against France to escape its horrors, enlisting in the US marines to seek refuge in America.<sup>27</sup> The British organized “press gangs”, who would search American ships for anyone who could pass as a British soldier and seize them, unless they could prove American citizenship. Several Americans were wrongfully seized and enlisted in the Royal Army.<sup>28</sup> American outrage became widespread following the Chesapeake Affair of 1807, in which the British HMS Leonard opened fire on the American USS Chesapeake for refusing to let British officers board the American ship to search for British deserters. Four men were forced into military enlistment, and three men on the American ship were killed in the affair.<sup>29</sup>

Over the next five years, the United States began planning their retribution against Great Britain, intending to gain leverage by capturing the British loyalist colony of Canada.<sup>30</sup> Following a series of changes in trade policies between the United States and Great Britain, American Secretary of State James Madison was sworn in as President in 1809.<sup>31</sup> Motivated by the outrage of Great Britain wrongfully seizing and searching American ships and a fervor to expand the territory of the United States, the United States officially declared war against Great Britain on June 17, 1812.

---

<sup>27</sup> “War of 1812.”

<sup>28</sup> “Embargo of 1807.”

<sup>29</sup> “War of 1812.”

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> “War of 1812 Timeline.”

## Topics for Debate:

### TOPIC A: Defending the Motherland

Upon his inauguration as President of the United States of America in 1809, James Madison made one motive clear: he would expand the territory of the United States of America by expanding north. President James Madison considered the invasion of Canada to be “a mere matter of marching”. However, the American president seems to be ignorant of the advantages you have—and could acquire—that would deter their advances. The colonial militia of Canada, local groups of soldiers enlisted through the universal compulsory military system enacted by Great Britain, have emerged in response to hostile American sentiments against Canada. Both Upper Canada and Lower Canada have their own specialized militia, with fencible military units serving garrison and patrol duty, sedentary militia from local communities in Canada trained for defense, and the regular army commissioned by Great Britain to serve in Canada.

Canadian territory—notoriously vast and treacherous—is completely foreign to the American military. They are unaware of the weather conditions, rugged terrain, and physical expansiveness that defines Canada with which Canadians are intimately acquainted. The Canadian-American border, however, is long and largely unguarded; it is in your best interest to be strategic and decisive in figuring out where the United States may choose to attack and how to station your troops. While it may prove advantageous to keep the fight on familiar Canadian soil, allowing America to cross over into Canada too far could have dire consequences.

One of your most valuable assets is the vast population of formerly-American Loyalists that comprise a large portion of Canada. The information that they may have regarding American military systems—possibly including typical patterns of attack, stagnant plans that could resurface, strengths and weaknesses, numerical or territorial advantages, etc.—could prove to be fruitful as you decide how to best protect the Motherland from her invaders.

#### Questions to Consider:

1. How can you best distribute your finite provisions of armies and resources to keep Canadian territory secure?
2. How will you maintain control over the Canadian-American border and the bodies of water to deter expansion?
3. To what extent will diplomacy or negotiation with the USA deter them from attacking?
4. Could information about American military plans be obtained in advance of attacks?
5. Can the casualties and deaths of allied soldiers and Canadian civilians be minimized?

## TOPIC B: Allies of the Maple Leaf

The affairs of Canada, Great Britain, the United States, and France have been intertwined for over a hundred years, with the alliance between Canada and Great Britain being of special interest. Canada's loyalty to Great Britain is the colony's trademark, where its status as a member of the British Empire has given Canada the ability to maintain itself through the brunt of military, political, and economic affairs. However, Britain's current preoccupation with the Napoleonic Wars has been keeping them distanced from the affairs between Canada and the United States, given that the Continental System enacted by the French Emperor has been weighing down on economic affairs between Great Britain, France, and North America. Being sidelined during a continental war has inadvertently put Canada at a disadvantage, as Great Britain can currently only provide Canada with advisory figures who can offer their military insight. Since Great Britain is preoccupied with the Napoleonic Wars and their military support may be unreliable, Canada may need to look for other allies.

Locally, the affairs of Indigenous Peoples have also been intertwined closely with that of both Canada and the United States of America. After the conclusion of the American Revolution in 1783, ceaseless American expansion westwards threatened First Nations settlements and many were forced to flee farther westwards or northwards into Canadian territory. As relations between the USA and Great Britain began to strain in the years leading up to 1812, the need for an alliance against a common enemy culminated in a pact between Canada, several First Nations leaders, and Native American groups. For the Indigenous groups, the unreliable, bureaucratic British-Canadians were better allies than the expansionist, impulsive Americans.<sup>32</sup> The shared reception of hostile treatment by the USA has given Canada, Great Britain, and their Indigenous allies a reason to band together in defense of Canadian territory.

As it stands, Upper Canada's only allies are Lower Canada, Great Britain, and the Indigenous groups fighting for the same cause. However, Great Britain's aid is limited and the alliances with Lower Canada and Indigenous groups are heavily conditional (elaborated on in Topic C). It is your prerogative as a member of the council to decide how to maintain and resolve the instability of these alliances and seek out new allies to aid in the war effort.

### Questions to Consider:

1. What resources can Indigenous allies and Great Britain provide?
2. How can the alliance between Indigenous groups and Canadians be strengthened?
3. How can stable correspondence be established with Lower Canada?
4. Are there other parties that Canadians can seek alliances with?

---

<sup>32</sup> "First Nations and Métis Peoples in the War of 1812."

## TOPIC C: Civil Tension & Turmoil

In parallel with the war that Canada is now fighting against the United States, internal conflict also looms within Canada's boundaries. Though there exist glaring cultural differences between habitants of Upper and Lower Canada, the main disparity lies in the economic conflict between the London-based Hudson's Bay Company and the Montreal-based North West Company. The Hudson's Bay Company currently holds total control over trade on Rupert's Land, but it struggles to counter the equally well-established North West Company's trading networks in the interior of Canada.

Additionally, many Upper Canadians and Indigenous allies depend heavily on the Hudson's Bay Company for food, tools, and necessities. In recent years, the resource supply system for weapons, food, and military gear has become extremely unreliable and slow; resource depletion is an anticipated concern in supplying the military and naval frontlines of the war. The unreliability of the fur trade for Indigenous groups—for whom these resources determine their day-to-day survival—has also negatively weighed down on their powerful yet unstable alliance with Canada.

As British-Canadians associated with Upper Canada, each of you have trading rights with the Hudson's Bay Company; you can barter for resources, or buy using the Made Beaver currency. Several of you are directly involved in making decisions over the governing and management of the Hudson's Bay Company as well. It is in your hands to decide how to best navigate the many conflicts that shadow Canada's economy, keeping in mind that these conflicts directly impact every aspect of the War of 1812.

### Questions to Consider:

1. What can be done to deal with the pressures of the North West Company and other opposing traders on the fur trade monopoly held by the Hudson's Bay Company?
2. How are Indigenous groups directly affected by the economic conflict? How might this impact Canada's alliance with them in the future?
3. How can Canada improve the system of supplying resources for the war effort?
4. How will you best use your personal resources to acquire necessities for the war effort?
5. How can a civil war between the two major competitors of the fur trade be avoided?

## Current State of Affairs:

Decades of global and civil unrest have brought you to this day in Toronto, Upper Canada on June 17th, 1812 as British-Canadian delegates loyal to Upper Canada. As a group of high-ranking politicians, governors, military commanders, diplomats, and businessmen, you form the privileged council at the strategic frontlines of this war, making decisions in real time on defensive operations, attacks, and counter attacks as the United States prepares to advance into Canadian territory. It stands to reason that you were selected for this council because you have chosen to fight for the sake of Great Britain and for the honour of the Crown.

Or have you?

It may not surprise you that the motives of the delegates around you do not exactly align with your own. It may not even surprise you that there are delegates among you who are willing to lie, deceive, and manipulate others to achieve their personal goals; you may even be one of them yourself. However, it may surprise you that, as opposed to the reward yielded from pursuing a personal agenda, you will be profoundly more rewarded by taking a holistic, collaborative approach to solving the issues at hand. Good alliances are built on reciprocity and mutual respect, and you stand to gain the most by treating the topics, your fellow delegates, and yourself as though you are all interconnected. (Spoiler alert: you really are!)

As you gain a grasp on the issues that your colony is faced with, you should begin to consider larger questions regarding your role in this committee. What can you do to ensure Canada emerges victorious and secure? What is the smartest or most efficient way to use your possessions to your advantage, or to Canada's advantage? Are you fighting in this war for Canada's honour or your duty to the colony, or are you fighting in this war on your own personal agenda of survival or vengeance? What do you stand to gain, and what can you not afford to lose?

As always, every crisis comes with the opportunity to assert yourself on the world stage and expand your influence over the course of events. Every action you carry out will have consequences; be warned that the wrong series of actions could lead to crises that you never expected to face nor have the capacity to handle! On the contrary, however, Canada has a long history of war, conflict, and adversity that could all come to a cathartic end if, and only if, you choose to play your cards right.

Canada's fate has been placed in your hands, delegates, and it is now yours to decide.



## Tips for Research:

This Background Guide is an organized summary of the complete history behind the War of 1812, but deeper research is needed to allow you to flesh out your role in this committee. The difference between a delegate who simply participates and a delegate who stands out is how far they have gone beyond the summary to immerse themselves, and the best and most obvious way to immerse yourself is to research, plan, and find pathways for your character to take!

To begin your research, familiarize yourself with the major powers involved in the War of 1812: Canada, the United States of America, and Great Britain. While France is not directly involved in this war, the Napoleonic Wars are an indirect cause of the War of 1812, so you are encouraged to familiarize yourself with France's state of affairs as well. Once you have done that, you are encouraged to do deeper research into each of the four individual subsections spanning Part I and Part II of the Historical Background section. You are not expected to have the Event Timeline memorized, but do take some time to understand the general sequence of events.

Next, you are encouraged to research a little bit more about Upper Canada, since that is where you are located and who you are fighting for! It is recommended to particularly research how Canada's division of territory has changed from the 1750s to 1812, and to ensure that you have a grasp on how it is divided now and how the USA intends to advance across its borders; the Territorial Timeline above will be especially helpful for this! It is also highly recommended to research a bit about the system of Upper Canada that your character is affiliated with. If you are a military commander or political leader, researching Canada's military and government systems will be very useful. If you are a businessman, tradesman, or diplomat, you are encouraged to research more into the socioeconomic affairs of Canada, especially related to the fur trade.

Finally, to pinpoint exactly what you want to accomplish in this committee, research your character, narrow down their motives and allies, and write your position paper! The character description is meant to point you in a specific direction to formulate your goals, but your personal research will enable you to formally step into this committee and get you thinking about the avenues that you can explore once debate begins.

If you are interested in trying to figure out the plans of the crisis team and how you might be able to use the available committee mechanics to your advantage, feel free to investigate how the War of 1812 and Napoleonic Wars played out in real history to anticipate what crises could arise. (Secret hint: Napoleon may or may not be more ambitious in this committee...)

If you have any questions about research regarding the historical background, your characters, or available mechanics, please don't hesitate to reach out to me, your committee director, at [1812@utmun.org](mailto:1812@utmun.org)!

## Bibliography

American Battlefield Trust. “War of 1812 Timeline,” August 4, 2023.  
<https://www.battlefields.org/learn/articles/war-1812-timeline>.

“Context of the Seven Years’ War > The Siege of Québec: An Episode of the Seven Years’ War > The National Battlefields Commission,” n.d. <http://bataille.ccbn-nbc.gc.ca/en/guerre-de-sept-ans/contexte.php>.

Digital Collections | McGill University Libraries. “The McGill University Napoleon Collection,” 2005. <https://digital.library.mcgill.ca/napoleon/english/>.

Encyclopedia Britannica. “Canada | History, Population, Immigration, Capital, & Currency,” October 19, 2023. <https://www.britannica.com/place/Canada/The-French-and-Indian-Seven-Years-War>.

“File:Anglo American War 1812 Locations Map-En.Svg - Wikipedia,” January 22, 2011.  
[https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Anglo\\_American\\_War\\_1812\\_Locations\\_map-en.svg](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Anglo_American_War_1812_Locations_map-en.svg).

Immigration, Refugees And Citizenship Canada. “Discover Canada - Canada’s History.” Canada.ca, October 26, 2015. <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/publications-manuals/discover-canada/read-online/canadas-history.html>.

“Loyalists in Canada | The Canadian Encyclopedia,” n.d.  
<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/loyalists>.

Monticello. “Embargo of 1807,” n.d.  
<https://www.monticello.org/research-education/thomas-jefferson-encyclopedia/embargo-1807/>.  
Rust, Owen. “The French & Indian War: Setting the Stage for the American Revolution.”

TheCollector, October 2, 2023. <https://www.thecollector.com/french-indian-war-seven-years-war/>.

Shaw, Malcolm. “Treaty | Definition, Examples, & Facts.” Encyclopedia Britannica, October 19, 2023. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/treaty>.

The Canadian Encyclopedia. “Confederation,” n.d.  
<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/confederation>.

## Bibliography

The Canadian Encyclopedia. "First Nations and Métis Peoples in the War of 1812," n.d.  
<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/first-nations-in-the-war-of-1812>.

The Canadian Encyclopedia. "History of the Armed Forces in Canada," n.d.  
<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/history-of-the-armed-forces-in-canada>.

The Canadian Encyclopedia. "Hudson's Bay Company," n.d.  
<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/hudsons-bay-company>.

The Canadian Encyclopedia. "The Coloured Corps: Black Canadians and the War of 1812," n.d.  
<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/the-coloured-corps-african-canadians-and-the-war-of-1812>.

The Canadian Encyclopedia. "War of 1812," n.d.  
<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/war-of-1812>.

"The Changing Shape of Ontario: A Guide to Boundaries, Names and Regional Governments - 1791," n.d. <https://www.archives.gov.on.ca/en/maps/textdocs/ontario-boundaries-1791.aspx>.

"The North West Company, 1779–1821 | The Canadian Encyclopedia," n.d.  
<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/the-north-west-company-17791821-feature>.

"The War of 1812: Important Figures," n.d.  
<http://www.archives.gov.on.ca/en/explore/online/1812/figures.aspx>.

"Treaty of Paris, 1783," n.d. <https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/treaty-1783/>.

Weeks, Linton. "What If Napoleon Had Come To America?" NPR, February 10, 2015.  
<https://www.npr.org/sections/npr-history-dept/2015/02/10/384778237/what-if-napoleon-had-come-to-america>.

Wikipedia. "French Revolution," October 16, 2023.  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/French\\_Revolution](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/French_Revolution).

Wikipedia. "Toronto," October 18, 2023. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Toronto#19th\\_century](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Toronto#19th_century).